340.35

Evaluating Breast Pumps

Overview

Introduction

Contract agencies should evaluate manual and electric breast pumps for safety, effectiveness, comfort, cost and convenience when selecting pumps for distribution to clients. This policy provides guidelines for evaluating manual and electric breast pumps.

Reference

National WIC Association: *Guidelines for WIC Agencies Providing Breast Pumps*. Position Paper 08-002 (2008).

In this policy

This policy contains the following topics.

Evaluating Manual Breast Pumps

Introduction

A manual breast pump meets the needs of many breastfeeding women who express milk when separated from their babies. A manual pump is a breast pump that is powered by the user (usually through arm and hand movements). Piston/cylinder pumps are effective for most women and easy to use. However, some women find one pump works better for them than other models. All manual breast pumps should be evaluated for safety, effectiveness, comfort, cost and convenience.

Ease of use

The manual pump should be:

- Easy to disassemble and reassemble,
- Easy to clean using common household detergents,
- Portable, and
- Comfortable to use.

Milk collection container

The milk collection container should:

- Be easy to remove with minimal spillage,
- Hold a minimum of four (4) ounces, and
- Be a container that can be used for feeding.

Technical function

The manual pump should:

- Have more than one flange size available to accommodate different size breasts and nipples,
- Maintain adequate but not excessive suction throughout collection, and
- Be constructed so that the gasket does not come in contact with breastmilk.

Print materials

Print materials should:

- Include pictures or diagrams that support the written directions
- Be available in languages other than English, and
- Be written at an appropriate literacy level.

Do not recommend bulb suction pumps

Bulb suction pumps (also called bicycle horn pumps) are not recommended because they:

- Are difficult to clean, allowing bacteria to grow in the bulb and contaminate expressed milk,
- Can result in bruised breast tissue and nipple damage because the suction cannot be controlled adequately.

Evaluating Electric Breast Pumps

Introduction

Electric pumps (including battery pumps) should be evaluated for safety, effectiveness, comfort, and convenience.

Ease of use

Electric and battery pumps and their collection kits should be:

- Easy to disassemble and reassemble,
- Easy to clean using common household detergents,
- Easy to convert to a manual pump, and
- Portable with a carrying case.

Milk collection container

The milk collection container should:

- Be easy to remove with minimal spillage,
- Hold a minimum of four (4) ounces, and
- Be a container that can be used for feeding.

Technical function

The electric pump should:

- Regulate the amount of suction control
- Alternate pressure setting during milk collection, and
- Automatically cycle at a minimum of 40 times per minute.

Note: Pumps intended for multiple users should minimize the potential for cross-contamination between users and use a closed system to prevent backflow.

Print materials

Print materials should:

- Include pictures or diagrams that support the directions
- Be available in languages other than English, and
- Be written at an appropriate literacy level.

Electrical needs

Electric pumps should:

- Use a standard electrical outlet and
- Have a UL approved power cord and plug.

Note: Encourage mothers using battery pumps to carry extra batteries with them. Rechargeable batteries may save money spent on batteries.

This page intentionally left blank.